

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY AMMAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2875

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

S E C R E T AMMAN 6507

EXDIS

DEPARTMENT PLEASE PASS SECDEF AND EUCOM

KUWAIT PLEASE PASS DOHA

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, BA

SUBJECT: BAHRAIN'S WEAPON REQUEST

REF: MANAMA 0888

1. WITH REGARD TO EMBASSY MANAMA'S SUGGESTION IN REFTEL THAT JORDAN MIGHT SUPPLY BAHRAIN OUT OF ITS TOW INVENTORY, REGRET WE HAVE TO BEG OFF ON THAT ONE WITHOUT EVEN DISCUSSING WITH JORDANIANS BECAUSE THE ANSWER WOULD BE IMMEDIATELY NEGATIVE.

2. EHN CONSIDERING TOW'S FOR BAHRAIN AND A POSSIBLE JORDANIAN CONNECTION, THE FOLLOWING FACTORS ARE PERTINENT:

A) JORDAN HAS 36 TOW LAUNCHERS ON HAND WHICH THEY RECEIVED IN EARLY 1974. TO DATE THEY HAVE NOT EXPERIENCED MAINTENANCE DIFFICULTIES WITH THESE WEAPONS. SINCE THE ORIGINAL FOUR-MAN, US TRAINING TEAM IN JANUARY FOR THREE WEEKS, THERE HAS NOT BEEN A REQUIREMENT FOR U.S. PERSONNEL IN COUNTRY TO ASSIST ON THIS SYSTEM.

B) JORDAN CONSIDERS THAT THIS NUMBER IS INADEQUATE

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TO DEFEND ITS NORTHERN BORDERS AGAINST A SYRIAN/IRAQI ARMORED

THREAT. THEREFORE, 180 LAUNCHERS ARE INCLUDED IN THE FY75 6A PROGRAM. FOR THIS REASON THEY WILL NOT CONSIDER RELEASING ANY OF THE WEAPONS ON-HAND, WHICH ARE PRESENTLY ASSIGNED TO AT COMPANIES IN TOW DIVISIONS.

C) IN ADDITION TO TOW LAUNCHERS AND MISSILES, TOW TRAINING SETS ARE REQUIRED TO MAINTAIN PROFICIENCY IN THE SYSTEM. JORDAN HAS THREE SETS AND IS IN THE PROCESS OF ORDERING THREE ADDITIONAL SETS BECAUSE OF LONG LEAD TIMES, HIGH FAILURE RATE OF EQUIPMENT, AND LONG DELAYS IN GETTING ITEMS REPAIRED IN CONUS. THIS IS A KEY ITEM IN ANY TOW PROGRAM, AND ITS LEAD TIME MAY WELL BE A DETERMINING FACTOR.

D. TRAINABLE MANPOWER FOR MAINTENANCE OF THE SYSTEM IS ALSO AN IMPORTANT CONSIDERATION. JAF MAINTENANCE PERSONNEL WHO HAVE AND WILL BE TRAINING IN CONUS ALREADY HAD EXTENSIVE OPTICAL AND ELECTRICAL BACKGROUNDS, AS WELL AS ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY. UNLESS BAHRAIN HAS SIMILARLY QUALIFIED PERSONNEL, THIS WILL BE ANOTHER HURDEL.

E. PROVISIONS WILL ALSO HAVE TO MADE, PROBABLY THROUGH AND FMS CASH CASE, TO PROVIDE DEPOT LEVEL MAINTENANCE OF THE SYSTEM IN CONUS, AS WELL AS TRANSPORTATION TO AN FROM THE EPOT.

2. ON THE POSITIVE SIDE, JORDAN MIGHT CONSIDER ASSISTING BAHRAIN, IF THE TOW SYSTEM IS ACQUIRED BY PROVIDING INTIAL CREW TRAINING IN JORDAN OR BAHRAIN. THEY WOULD ALSO HAVE THE CAPABILITY TO PROVIDE MAINTENANCE AT A LEVEL COMPARABLE TO WHAT THEY PROVIDE THEIR OWN FORCES. HOWEVER, AS IN THE JORDAN CASE, ARRANGEMENTS WOULD HAVE TO BE MADE FOR DEPOT REPAIR IN CONUS.
PICKERING

NOTE BY OC/T: NOT PASSED ABOVE ADDRESSEES.

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